

BEFORE THE SOUTH CAROLINA STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

In the Matter of the Revocation)	
)	
or Suspension of the Educator)	ORDER OF SUSPENSION
)	(BREACH OF CONTRACT)
Certificate of Harold L. Bell)	
)	
Certificate 904394)	

SUMMARY OF THE CASE

The South Carolina State Board of Education (State Board) considered this matter on April 12, 2005. On March 2, 2005, the Office of Teacher Certification sent Harold L. Bell a notice of his right to a due process hearing regarding the possible suspension of his South Carolina educator certificate by certified mail, return receipt requested, delivery restricted to addressee. Mr. Bell received the notice, as evidenced by the signed postal receipt bearing his signature. Mr. Bell did not request a hearing during the period specified by the notice letter. After considering the evidence presented, the State Board voted to suspend Mr. Bell's certificate for one year.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Mr. Bell holds a valid South Carolina educator certificate with over two years of teaching experience. Mr. Bell held a contract for the 2004-2005 school year with the Greenville County School District (District). On January 11, 2005, Mr. Bell notified his principal at Goldenstrip Career Center that he intended to resign from his position as a Carpentry Instructor, effective January 28, 2005. By letter dated February 1, 2005, the District Superintendent wrote to Mr. Bell advising him that he would not be released from his contract because his resignation did not meet District guidelines. On February 22, 2005, the District Board of Trustees voted to request that the State Board suspend Mr. Bell's certificate.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

The State Board may suspend the certificate of any person for unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. §§ 59-25-150 and 160 (2004). Breach of contract is deemed to be unprofessional conduct. S.C. Code Ann. § 59-25-160 (2004); 24 S.C. Code Regs. 43-58 (1992). The State Board finds that there is sufficient evidence supporting its conclusion that Mr. Bell breached his contract with the Greenville County School District, warranting the suspension of Mr. Bell's certificate 904394 for a period of one year, from April 12, 2005, through April 11, 2006. Should Mr. Bell wish to have his certificate reinstated at the end of the suspension period, he may make a written request for reinstatement to the Office of Teacher Certification.

South Carolina State Board of Education

By: /S/ Paul M. Forrester

Paul M. Forrester, Chair

Columbia, South Carolina

April 12, 2005